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~our home~

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COVER: Meet a Willowgrove gardener who paints in evergreen on a living canvas. Photo by Lillian Lane.

HOME front



The decade has rolled over, and as we thaw out from our Prairie winter, let me be the first to welcome you into the Roaring 20's—version 2.0! It has been a great decade at *Saskatoon HOME* magazine, we have been delighted to share so many great local projects and stories with you, our loyal readers. We are excited to see what the next decade of home design, renovation, landscaping and décor will be created by our local Saskatoon people.

With this kick off to the Roaring 20's, we have prepared an issue full of local Saskatoon goodness. Be inspired by a couple who reno'd their way to their dream home, and another couple whose love story began with a mutual passion for dahlias. Enjoy our new regular feature by a local YXE celeb Britt as she takes you through the steps to pour your own concrete countertops. Read about an evergreen backyard that would make the CBC's *Raccoons* envious, a multigenerational home build and a delectable family Scandinavian meatball recipe. And to top it off, our local historian Jeff O'Brien gives you a window into life in Saskatoon during the last century's Roaring 20's. It is amazing to see how far we have come, and it we are excited to see where this decade will take us.

Happy Reading!

Amanda Soulodre

OWNER & PUBLISHER

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DIY WITH BRITT



THIS ISSUE'S PROJECT— *CONCRETE COUNTERTOPS*

BRITT ARNASON

A little about Britt...

Britt Arnason bought her first house at 18 years of age in Melville, SK. A great bang for her buck, she paid $25,000 for a 900 sq. ft. single-family home. It needed a lot of TLC, so she gutted and renoed the home, learning how to do everything herself, only hiring out the plumbing and electrical. Today she owns and rents out 13 'doors' (a combination of single-family homes and duplexes) throughout the province, including her original reno in Melville. ➤

Watch for Britt's Summer issue DIY — Pallet Projects.

Want more inspiration? IG: @investorgirlbritt



DIY — CONCRETE COUNTERTOPS

I recently poured concrete countertops in my latest home purchase on Avenue D in Saskatoon. I am currently renting it out on VRBO for short-term rentals.

I'm not going to lie; this isn't the easiest DIY out there. This was my first time doing it. But it is very fun and rewarding and can save you a lot of money compared to quartz or granite countertops. All in, the cost for the countertops was $500.

Concrete countertops in general can have cracks, bubbles, slopes, colour variations. The imperfections are what make this type of project unique and beautiful.

1 SETTING UP A MOULD

Cut out 5/8" plywood to cover the counters. Mine were a little tricky as we did an 8" overhang for the island and we also have a farmhouse/apron sink we had to cut out. It's very important to get these measurements for the sink right as there is no going back. The ply should hang about 1/4" over the cabinets.

Tip: Remember to leave a hole for the faucet. We didn't do this and it made it harder to cut out with a hole saw later.

Next build a frame out of 2x4's that goes tightly underneath the plywood to help support the weight of the concrete. You can screw together the sides so it is solid, but it should fit snugly underneath the plywood. Use shims if you have to.

Use a product called melamine to make side forms. This will give the concrete a smooth finish. We cut the melamine into 3 ¼" strips that will go along the perimeter of the countertops. Screw the melamine strips into your 2x4 frame. There should be a depth of 2" from the top of the melamine face to the 2x4 frame we built. This will give it a nice overhang and you will not be able to see the ply we have underneath.

Tape the inside and outside corners with Tuck Tape, then use silicone around the edges of the form. This will keep everything nice and sealed.









2 THE POUR



We used a galvanized stucco mesh (see top right photo) to strengthen the concrete. Similar to rebar in large concrete pours. We put screws in the ply sticking up into the concrete to ensure there would be no movement of the slab.

For the concrete, look for a mix specifically for counters. The benefit of this type of mix is the super-plasticizer additive which provides a flowable mix at a low water/cement ratio. High-flow formula minimizes the need for mechanical vibration, and it has a reduced-shrinkage formulation. It will be fully cured after 28 days.

Mix with water and pour into forms. You will need a concrete trowel and a straight edge (like a 2x4) that can smooth out the surface.

Use a mallet to hit sides and bottom to release any air bubbles from the concrete. If you have a reciprocating saw, you can remove the blade and run it along the sides and bottom as well (see bottom right photo). The vibrations from the tool will let the air bubbles rise to the surface.

Once completely poured, continue the process of smoothing and misting with water while the counters are starting to cure. The amount of time needed will depend on your environment and project size, but allow for a full 12-hour day. The mixing and pouring will take a couple hours, then there is a lot of smoothing time while you wait for the concrete to set. Remember that once it is set, that is it, so keep an eye on them and trowel every 15 minutes. ➤





3 FINISH COAT

Once your counters are set, give them a sand. I used a sanding block, but if you want more of a polished look you can use polishing pads.

There are a few different options for a finish coat. We chose a food-safe sealer. You have to apply a number of coats as concrete is a very porous material.

If you do not want to have water spots, beeswax is a great product as a top coat. But it requires a bit of maintenance as you have to recoat every six months. Poly is another option that requires less maintenance, but it is not food-safe.

The finish coat is best applied with a lint-free roller.





BRITT'S TIPS

PRACTICE FIRST: If you have not done anything like this before, I would strongly suggest starting out with a small rectangular piece like a vanity top or coffee table top.

DO YOUR RESEARCH: I hope to give you some inspiration and tips, but there are tons of videos online. I always do my research and check out multiple sources when starting projects such as this one. Concrete can serve a wide variety of purposes and be suited to your style. There are dyes and stamps. Have fun with it.

CHECK OPTIONS: There are multiple options on how to do these. We decided to pour in place because of the size and shape of them. There are benefits to pouring off-site and moving them in as well.

IMPORTANT: Concrete counters are very heavy! You have to make sure you have the structure to support the weight.

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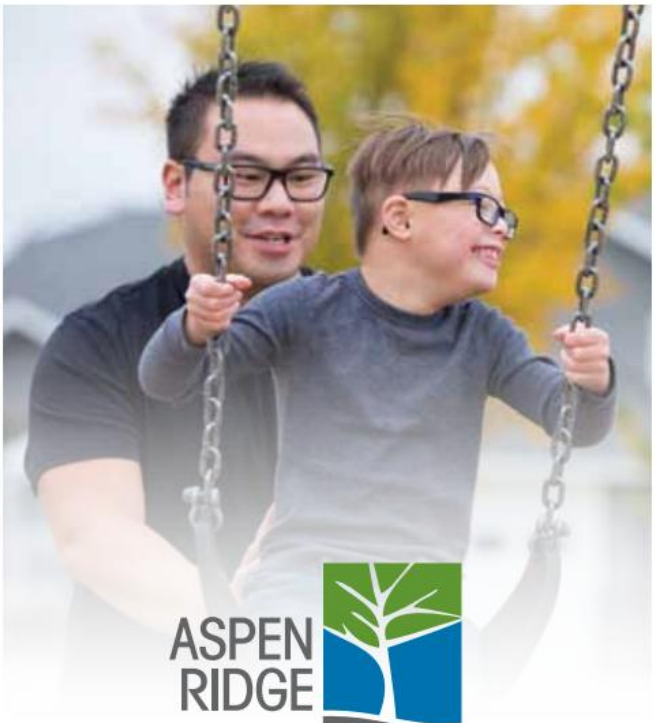
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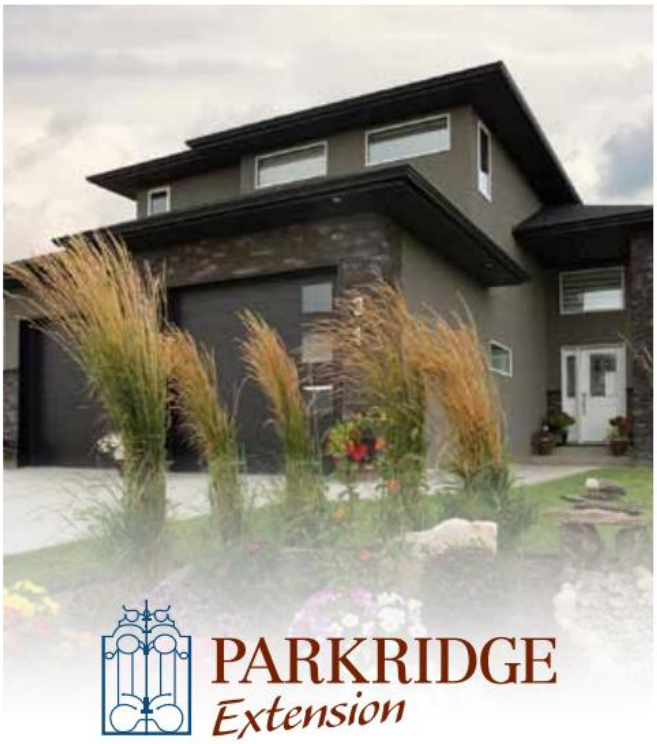
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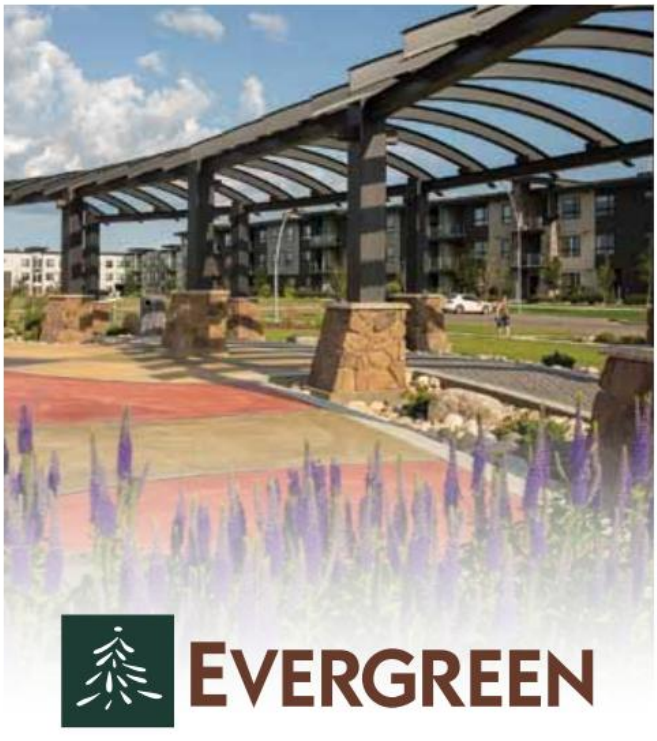
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EVERGREEN GARDEN

A FLOURISHING FOUR-SEASON MASTERPIECE

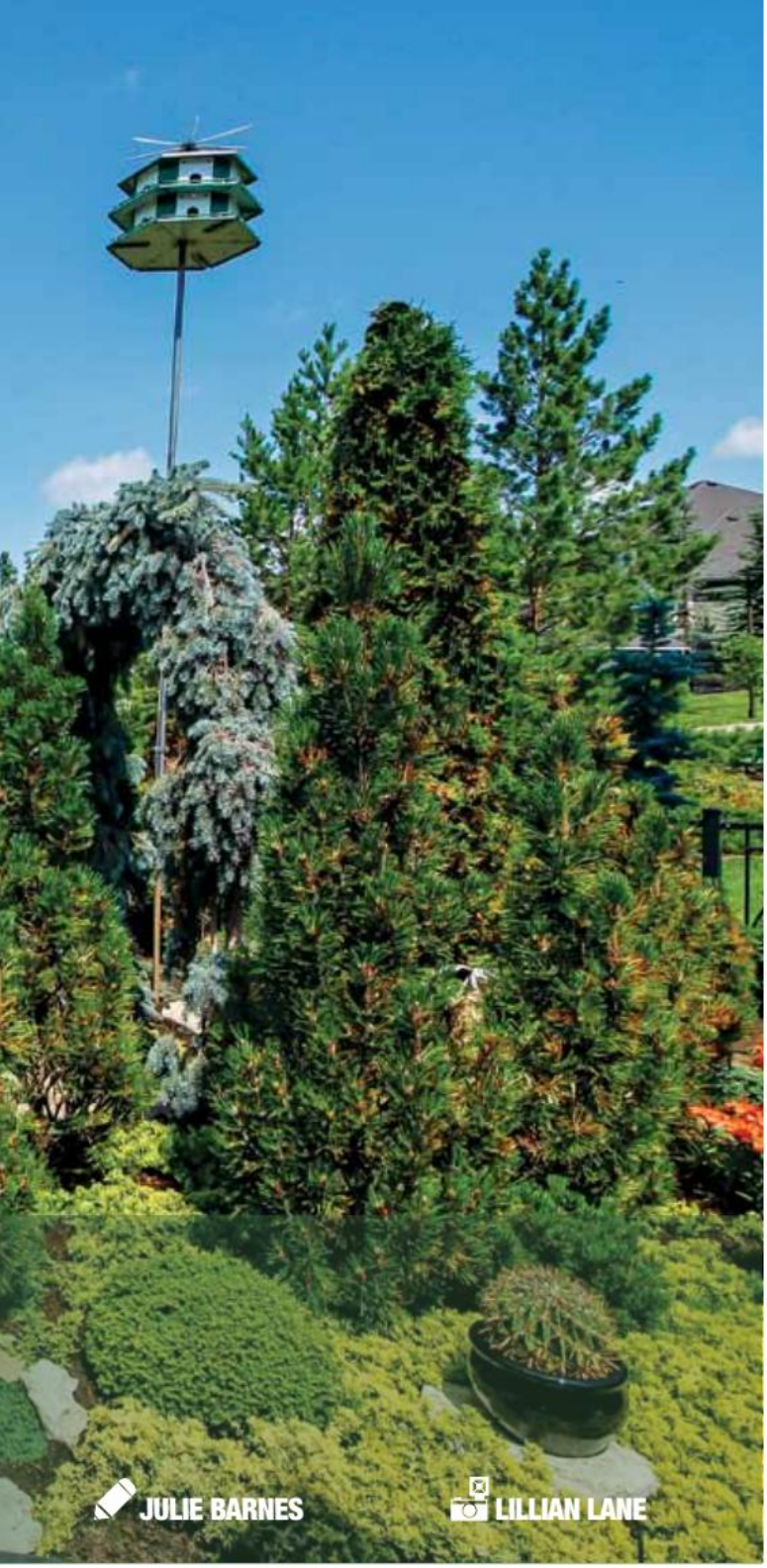
Regan Schneider's yard is his canvas. He considers his outdoor space "living art," but unlike a finished painting, framed and mounted on a wall, Regan's masterpiece is still a work in progress 16 years after he planted the first seed.

In 2004, Regan designed his new house in Willowgrove with an expansive window overlooking the backyard. "When you're designing a yard, you figure out where you're going to be looking the most and go from there," he says. "You make your best view from where you're going to be viewing it the most."

Sightlines and Sunshine

Regan designed his yard with sightlines in mind, and says long, uninterrupted stretches make his yard look bigger. "From kitty corner to kitty corner, leave that open and then it looks a little bit grander."

He also considered the changing sunlight throughout the day, sourcing and planting trees and shrubs that wouldn't block the sunlight from entering his yard. From there, he divided the space into four sitting areas, connected by undulating interlock paver pathways. When you include



JULIE BARNES

LILLIAN LANE

his upper deck, which he calls "the perch," there are five sitting areas in total.

100% DIY

This wasn't Regan's first foray into gardenscaping. As a self-taught gardener, he applied lessons he learned from his previous gardens. "I found out from previous experience, the longer and smoother the curve of hardscaping and garden bed edging, the better it looks."

Every paver in those curving pathways was handplaced by Regan, who handled all the landscaping himself. He also built ➤





Curb appeal: Regan designed his front yard to blend seamlessly with his back yard.



the retaining walls, stone columns, and some of the water features. But long before placing his first paver, Regan laid down sod to get a sense of where the pathways should go. Once he found a layout that felt right, he pulled up the grass and replaced it with hardscaping. This helped him confirm he liked the layout before turning it into hardscape.

Planning the Plantings

As for the garden beds, Regan says he planned the plantings from low to high. "In an evergreen yard, you start off with the ground cover, and then your roughly three-foot trees, and then you move to your columnar or your trees with more height in the centre of a bed or on the perimeter."

Although most of his trees are evergreen, Regan included a few deciduous varieties. He planted poplars by the windows because he enjoys the ambience created by the leaves rustling in the wind. Otherwise, the focus on evergreens is due to their year-round cover and colour. "I'm trying for a four-season look," he says. Vibrant succulents and potted flowers punctuate the space with colour throughout the spring and summer.

As the trees and shrubs fill out, flowers and perennials can get squeezed out. But Regan is happy to find new homes for them. "I used to plant over 2,000 flowers in my yard each year from seed. You miss that kind of stuff, but I'm looking for serenity and tranquility at the moment," he says.

The Birds and the Bees

Over 75 varieties of trees



Regan planted over 75 varieties of trees and shrubs.



Loved and well-used, Regan designed and built this purple Martin birdhouse condo.



A carpet of lush Virginia Creeper shrouds the sitting area beneath the top deck.



and shrubs in the yard create a diverse habitat for birds. Birdhouses and feeders create further incentive for them to make themselves at home. Robins, martens, house wrens, house finches, chickadees and cedar waxwings have all nested in the yard at one point or another.

Virginia creeper, Boston ivy, flowers and blooming cacti attract bees to the yard.

Minimal Maintenance

Most of Regan's evergreens are miniature varieties, and the majority of the maintenance involves trimming the new growth each spring. "The tree trimming puts me over the top from what people do with their normal, primarily grass yards."

However, with his healthy soil and ground covers, he spends less time weeding than he would on grass cutting, had he laid grass.

An irrigation system also minimizes upkeep, and Regan says evergreens don't require as much watering as grass. "It's only when you have new trees that you have to be concerned about the watering." Another bonus? In the fall, there're very few leaves to clean up.

Cold Climate Challenges

The biggest challenge for Regan has been winterkill. "You've got to be able to adapt," he says. "If I lose a tree, it's an opportunity to go with something better or try something different. Instead of getting down about it, it can come back even better—it's an opportunity to improve."

Finding a fresh replacement is part of the fun. "The variety of trees ➤



Boston ivy gracefully drapes over an arbour in the back.

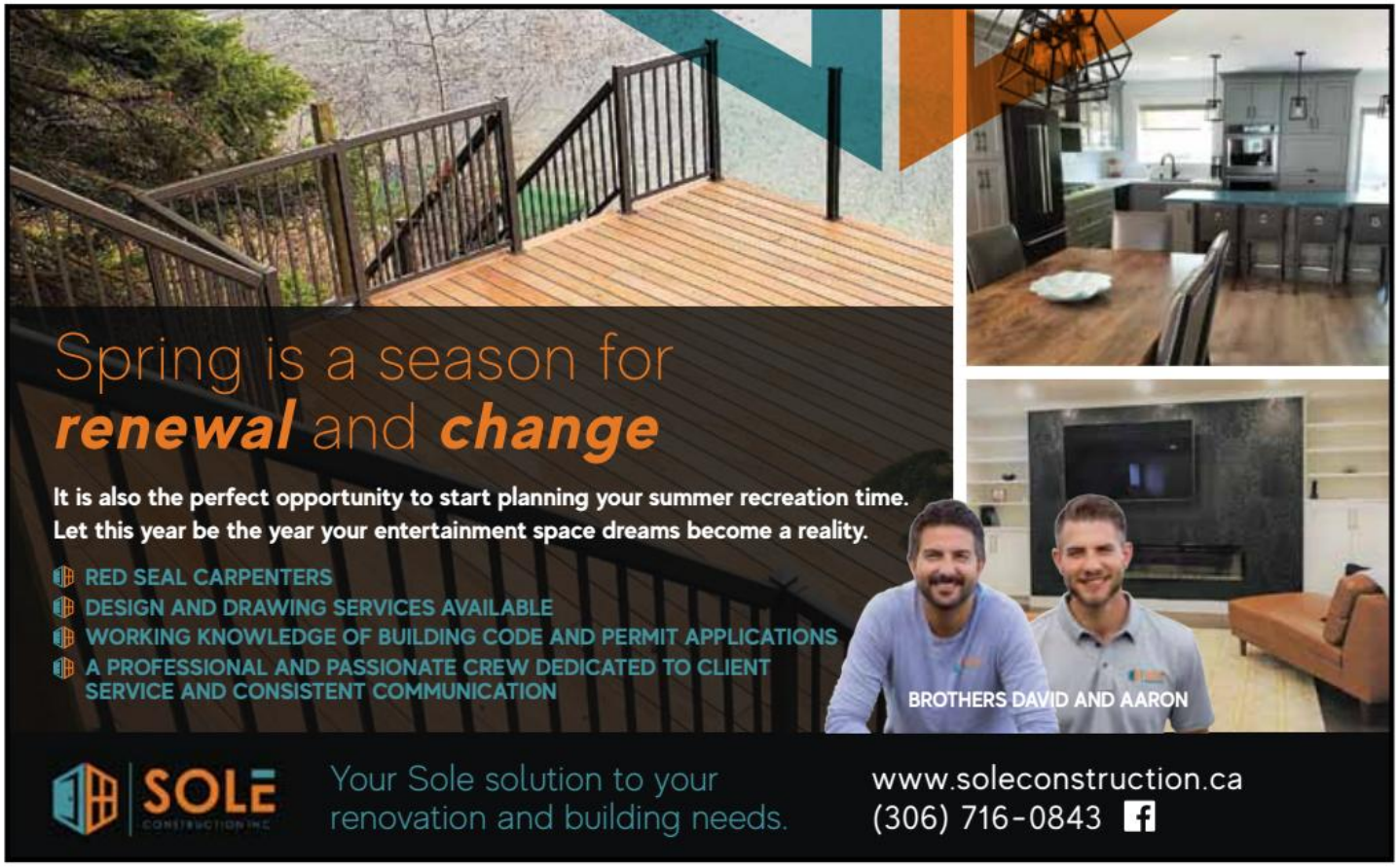


Regan is training a weeping Norway spruce to create a natural archway in his front yard.

they have available at the greenhouses now—it's just amazing and they're from all over the world," he says. He has a particular affinity for varieties from Norway.

Natural Arches, Arbours and Vines

One such variety is the weeping Norway spruce, which Regan has ingeniously trained to create a natural archway in his front yard. He's done the same thing with weeping blue spruce, crafting two arches in the back yard, and last year started training a weeping larch for a future arch. "It's about 22-feet tall right now. I'll take him up to 30-feet and then I'm going to let him weep." He adds, "You don't want to do a seven-





'Mother Lode' and 'Icee Blue' juniper ground covers help deter weeds.

foot arbour like you would for vines." They need to grow tall enough to bend into an arch you can comfortably walk through.

"I do have one arbour with a vine on it, and that's Boston ivy," says Regan. The arbour and archways help define the sitting areas, and can also spark curiosity about what's around the corner. "It creates interest when you can't see the whole garden at once," says Regan. "A little mystery is good."

A cozy sitting area beneath the upper deck is enclosed with curtains and a lush wall of Boston ivy. It provides a sheltered, private spot out of the wind, allowing Regan to enjoy his garden on a rainy day, or simply retreat from the summer sun. ➤



The homeowner, Regan Schneider, designed, planted and hardscaped the entire property himself.





Succulents and blooming cacti add colour and variety to the mostly evergreen yard.

More Than a Hobby

"I've always been fascinated by nature and how things sprout from a seed and grow and come to full maturity," says Regan. He's nurtured houseplants since he was young, and still owns a thriving jade plant he's had since he was a teen. It's now almost 40 years old.

Regan draws inspiration from other gardens and gardeners, and is thrilled when visitors find inspiration in his. One of his biggest joys is the one-on-one conversations he's had with people about his garden.

"I've had neighbours ask me, 'So, are you done yet?' No, I'll never be done. Gardening is not a hobby for me. It is a lifestyle."

Spoken like a true artist.

Julie Barnes



Regan calls his yard "living art," and says his work on it will never be complete.

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A NUTANA COUPLE'S RENOVATION JOURNEY

KRISTA MARTENS LILLIAN LANE

What do you get when you take two professional women's love for DIY renovation shows, character homes, and each other? A fully renovated character home in the heart of one of Saskatoon's most loved neighbourhoods. A sanctuary where stress is left at the door.

The Neighbourhood

It was the summer of 2018. Sarah Mueller, a general surgeon, and Morgan Farrell, a law enforcement officer, were on their third date enjoying a pristine summer evening aboard the Prairie Lily. Sarah pointed out the eastern bank of the South Saskatchewan River. "That is the neighbourhood we are going to live in." Morgan, a transplant from Vancouver Island, was relatively new to Saskatoon. She didn't know anything about the place Sarah was so proudly declaring as their future home.

"She filled me in on why she loved the Nutana area. We went through a number of open houses looking at homes on tree-lined streets, and I was quick to fall in love with it as well," says Morgan.

"When you know what feels right, you just go for it," Sarah agrees.

And did they ever. In August 2018, Sarah and Morgan began a year-long renovation journey with their newly acquired ➤

1930's character home on University Drive.

The Journey Begins

From the moment they walked in, they knew this house was the one. After purchasing it, they "walked through with our contractor, A.R.T. Construction, and started the journey," says Sarah. "We knew that we wanted a space where we could entertain and bring our family and friends together in an open-concept space. We also knew we loved character homes, so we were excited about the opportunities the house had."

They both also recognized the challenges ahead. The three-bedroom, one-bathroom home with a separate basement suite had been a rental property when they bought it, and it was in desperate need of TLC.

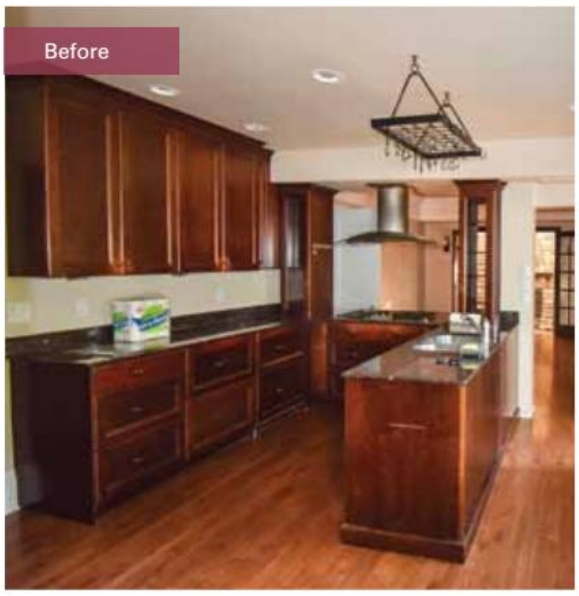
All in the Details

It is no surprise that both Sarah and Morgan focused on three key areas they didn't have in their previous City Park house. These must-haves have become favourite elements in the new home.



When Sarah and Morgan saw this home on University Drive, they knew at once it was "the one." It was serendipitous; it's said that the first owner of the home in 1931 was a Dr. McDonald, the first board-certified general surgeon in the province. New homeowner Sarah is a general surgeon.



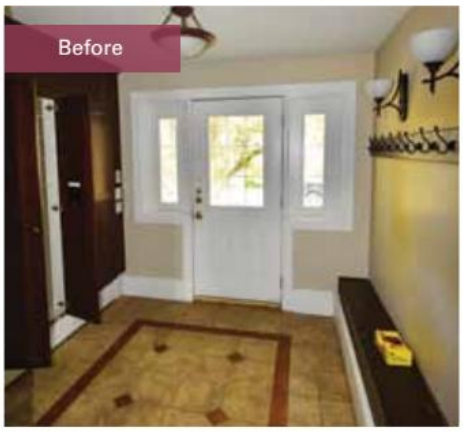




Special touches, like the sliding door built by Sarah's father leading into the ensuite, and the doorknob from Sarah's grandfather's farmhouse, add personal meaning to the space. The ensuite, sans tub, also fits the couple's lifestyle.

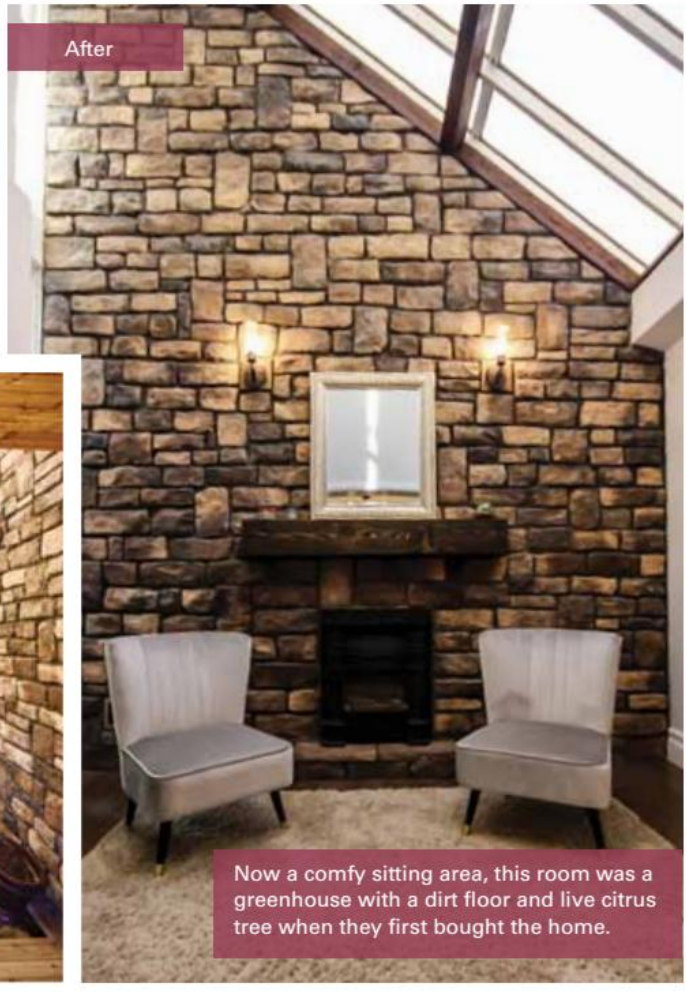


After



Before





After





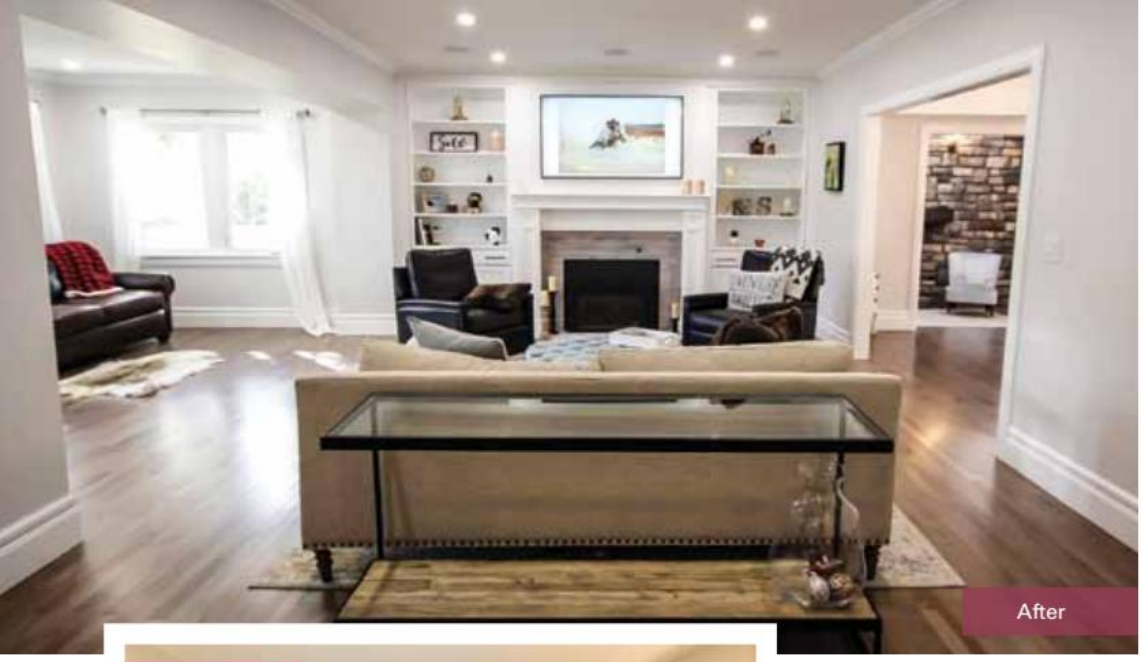
Before

Now a comfy sitting area, this room was a greenhouse with a dirt floor and live citrus tree when they first bought the home.

The master walk-in closet was an absolute. The addition of an ensuite bathroom on the upper level was a must. A kitchen that could become the entertaining hub was also a top priority.

"We knew we needed to take this home down to the studs. At one point the only thing left was the staircase," says Morgan. "We even went as far as to recreate the original baseboards we weren't able to salvage." But the couple kept all of the original doors and hardware with one special exception. "The doorknob that leads into our master bedroom comes from my grandfather's St. Benedict farmhouse." Sarah smiles. "It was important for me to have a piece of my Saskatchewan roots in our new home."

"All we could think of was how much we wanted open concept living and we had big ideas of how to get there," she adds. ➤



After



Before

Kitchen, Bath, Decisions on the Fly

"When construction started in the upper level guest bathroom, our contractor had to take out over four centimetres of concrete from the floor. At one point, there was a hole directly above the kitchen area. They had to restructure the entire floor area," Sarah explains. "I spent so much time in a flooring store, rethinking my choices. I kept thinking I'd made a huge mistake. I'd hop on a video call to Morgan and send her pictures. It was not easy, but we made decisions."

"The one element here that does have tremendous meaning to us is the sliding door that Sarah's dad made for us," shared Morgan. The door has pride of place on a track separating the ensuite from the master bedroom.

"The kitchen needed help," adds Sarah. "We loved the little butler's pantry in the kitchen. It was the perfect spot for dropping off your phone and keys, and you could see it straight from the entry. When we added the French door, we gained the direct sightline to the rear yard, and it was perfect. It brought a connection from the front of



the home to the rear."

In the ensuite, they chose items that fit their lifestyle instead of resale. "We opted to have just a shower only," says Sarah. "I plan to live here forever," she says.

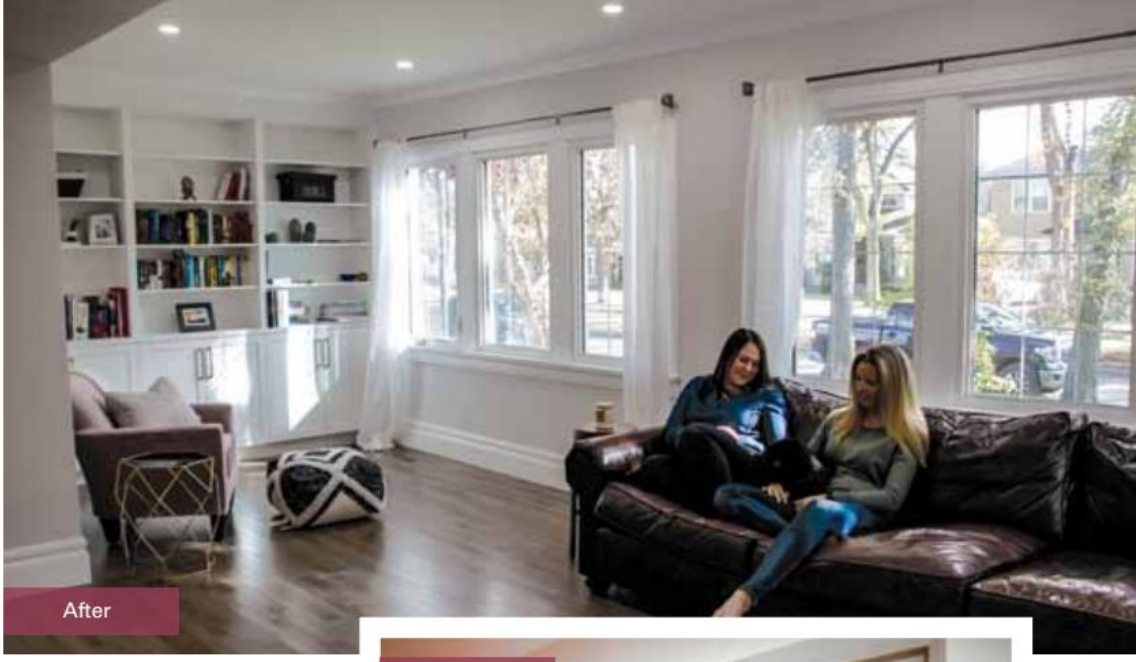
The Surprise

The most unique and transformed space was, no doubt, the Juliette balcony and indoor arbour area within the home. "There was a dirt room inside the home where there had been a in-ground hot tub and a citrus tree, if you can believe it," says Sarah. The balcony, connected to the master bedroom, offered a view from above.

The arbour area wasn't functional, but the couple was confident they could find a more purposeful use for it. "When we started digging out the space, we found an old water trough," Morgan adds. "I'm not even kidding!"

Just off the dining room with direct views of the kitchen and living room, the area now has become a favourite cozy space to relax with their dog Stevie Nicks. The space now also features a main floor powder room.

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A walk-in closet, just off the master bedroom, was a must-have for the couple.





Stevie Nicks enjoys herself in the nook just off the master bedroom.



The year-long reno project has made Sarah, left, and Morgan appreciate their home and neighbourhood even more.

just the two of us, we never feel lost in what lots of people would consider a big house," says Morgan.

What Doesn't Kill You

"We knew we had to put our energies in what mattered most," Sarah insists. "We took the approach of divide and conquer." Both women have high-stress occupations. They weren't able to be on site at a moment's notice during renovations, so they had to trust the process and their contractor to make immediate decisions on their behalf.

"At moments, it almost became comical," Sarah remembers. "The one-thing-after-another things that come up, you could never plan for. All we could do was laugh."

During their renovation both Sarah and Morgan were juggling the renovation on top of demanding work and travel schedules.

"If we could make it through all this, we can make it through anything life has to throw at us," says Morgan.

Sarah agrees. "Quite honestly, I'm surprised at how everything came together so well in the end. Each day we're so grateful. We fall more in love with the quirks that remind us it's still a character home, and with what we've done to make this house our own."

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COLOUR OF THE YEAR 2020
CLASSIC BLUE

KARIN MELBERG SCHWIER PANTONE COLOR INSTITUTE

Now that we're well into the Roaring Twenties Redux, there's good reason to feel a little blue.

Twenty years ago, the Pantone Color Institute began its annual tradition of choosing a colour that would be a major influencer in fashion, home décor and design, travel, entertainment, technology, art, social media, sports and various industries. Colour experts are said to "comb the world" for indicators that determine the 'it' colour to watch for the year. That first year, Cerulean became the 2000 shade of blue at the forefront. Twenty years and 21 colours later—2016's Rose Quartz and Serenity (a shade of blue) shared the mantle—blue makes the cut again, a hue to bookend these two decades. This time, it's a classic.

Old, New, Borrowed, Blue

So what particular kind of blue is this Classic Blue 19-4052? In the descriptors of Pantone publicists, it's "trustworthy, dependable, stable and calming." It's the sky at dusk, that serene deepening blue when the first star is visible. It's a familiar yet enchanting shade that suggests a vast expanse of boundless possibilities. In a chaotic world, returning to a classic means a colour that is approachable and friendly. But this particular indigo is also full of new potential.

Big talk and a lot of responsibility for a colour. Look around. Colour is big business. Beyond that, in a world of upheaval, uncertainty and unrest, being a calming influence means Classic Blue has its work cut out.

An Anchoring Azure

Each year, *Saskatoon HOME* talks with Leatrice (Lee) Eiseman, Executive Director of the Pantone Color Institute, at her home office on Bainbridge Island, Washington. The Institute is a colour consultant unit that researches and forecasts global colour trends and advises various industries on brand identity.

But what comes first? Is the trend toward a particular palette already on the global scene or does Pantone set the agenda for what will be ➤







seen in fashion, design, entertainment and other industries for the year? Lee explains.

"It's a bit of both," she says. "This blue is a classic color, just as the name implies, so it will be seen in various applications prior to being chosen as the Color of the Year, but it gains more traction after the release is made public." So it's not so much chicken *or* the egg, but more chicken *and* the egg. "We look for the possibilities of the growing usage of the color," Lee adds, "and create the rationale as to why we believe in it."

The 2020 colour has been called "solid and dependable." Lee has also described Classic Blue as "imbued with a deep resonance, PANTONE 19-4052 Classic Blue provides an anchoring foundation."

A Comfortable Camaraderie

Classic Blue plays well with others, specifically those in the accompanying Pantone Home and Interior Colour Palette for 2020. It's comfortable, but still has a little spice.

"It is an extremely versatile color, one that can be used as background easily," Lee explains. "There is some drama as there is a tad of red as an undertone to this particular blue, but not over-the-top. It's not as somber as navy, nor as bright as royal blue. It combines very well with all other colors in the spectrum and can be easily used with black. There is no mistaking this is a blue, whereas navy usually doesn't provide enough contrast with blacks or deep grays, even browns."

At Home Applications

Lee is steeped in the business of colour, but she usually has her own personal favourite applications for each Colour of the Year. This year is no different.

"I love it in cosmetic applications and have bought three bottles of nail polish that are spot on," she says. "It is spectacular on a table top, especially in glassware and I love it in patterns like Blue Willow on china."

That versatility comes through again as Lee explains how Classic Blue can comfortably go small or open wide and go big.

"It would be an amazing ceiling color in a bedroom, imitating the time of day when the world is winding down to quiet time," she insists. Who wouldn't want to lie in bed and gaze up at that?

A Subtle Reassurance

When Cerulean Blue was selected as the first annual Colour of the Year in 2000, the United States was in turmoil over fears about the growing hole in the ozone, the possible devastation of the Y2K ➤



virus, the largest solar flare in over ten years, and the nail-biting election vote recount in the testy Bush v. Gore presidential campaign. Now, with recent impeachment trials dominating the U.S. administration and infiltrating the public's psyche, perhaps Classic Blue will provide a calming, steadying force.

The fact that blue is the identifying colour for the Democratic Party is probably just coincidence. It's worth noting Baywatch Red didn't make the cut. Still, Flame Scarlet did dominate the New York Fashion Week runway colour palette.

Karin Melberg Schwier





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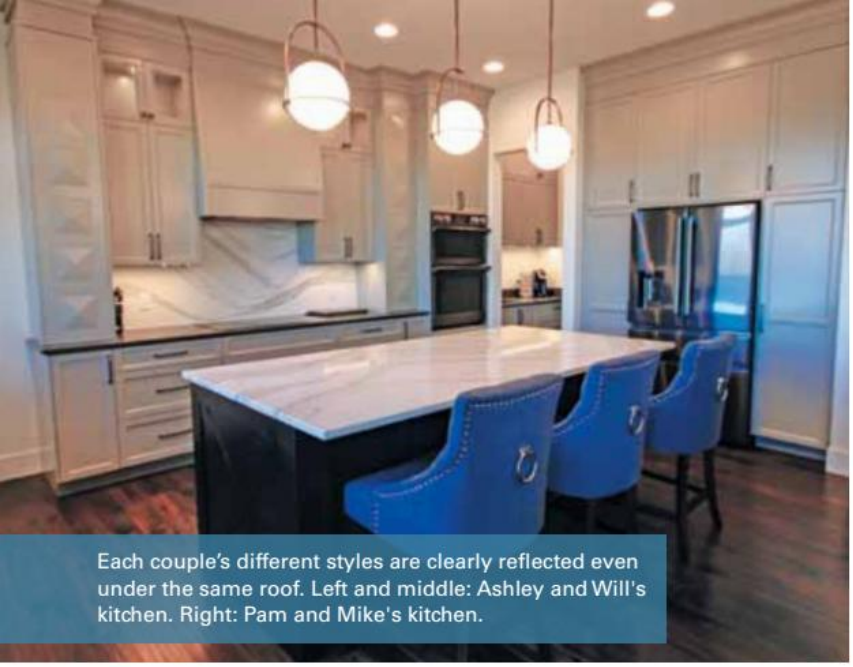
KARIN MELBERG SCHWIER LILLIAN LANE

When Will and Ashley couldn't find the right fit for a lot or home in the city, they headed a few minutes east to Saddle Ridge Estates and fell in love. Ashley's parents, Mike and Pam, had lived in their Massey Place home on Saskatoon's west side for 27 years, opting to renovate after giving up on their own dream of acreage living. When the kids called to say they found a place to build in Corman Park, it turned out to be literally a stone's throw from land the parents had considered buying a few years before.

"We had been on the list with the Rural Municipality of Corman Park for a long time, but Pam thought that ship had sailed," recalls Mike. "In fact, we had just taken the East Ridge Developments number off our phone when the kids called and said they'd found a chunk of land. Right in the Tower Hill area where we had looked. We couldn't believe it!"

Entertaining the Idea

Will, who designed and helped build three homes previously, knows his way around home design apps. As he and his wife Ashley toyed with a plan for ➤







Each couple's different styles are clearly reflected even under the same roof. Left and middle: Ashley and Will's kitchen. Right: Pam and Mike's kitchen.

their new home, he looked hard at one with a wing. "You know," he said to her, "this plan would be perfect if your parents ever lived with us."

"The more we thought about it, the more it made sense," says Ashley. "Two homes on the same piece of land wasn't allowed. But we could make two homes in one work."

Laying the Foundation

The two couples began having serious conversations about the idea of living together—yet separately—and each composed pro and con lists. Ashley and Will have two boys and Lincoln, a large dog. Mike and Pam, who have rescue cat Finnegan, still work fulltime, and while they love spending time together as a family and enjoy watching grandsons grow, they aren't angling to be built-in babysitters. All agree that laying out expectations was a necessary early step.

Giving the family chats more backbone is a smart part of planning. "We had lawyers for land purchase, and worked out how would we handle things in event of split up or death," says Will. "You've got to have the tough conversations. And any good lawyer should be forcing you to have those discussions early on."

"I don't think this arrangement would work for people who don't get along," Mike says. "Ashley and her mother have always had this terrific bond. They're more like sisters. If there's friction, or the chance of friction, you'd better think twice."

Doing the Home Work

Will did some research with the RM and soon learned a "secondary suite" would be allowed. "But we didn't want the traditional basement or over-the-garage in-law suite." They tried to think of it like a glorified duplex "that doesn't look like a duplex."

The design process was a long one—almost a year—with lots of "hoops" as he dealt with the municipality. But Will was determined; he travels a lot for work and didn't like the idea of Ashley out on an acreage alone with

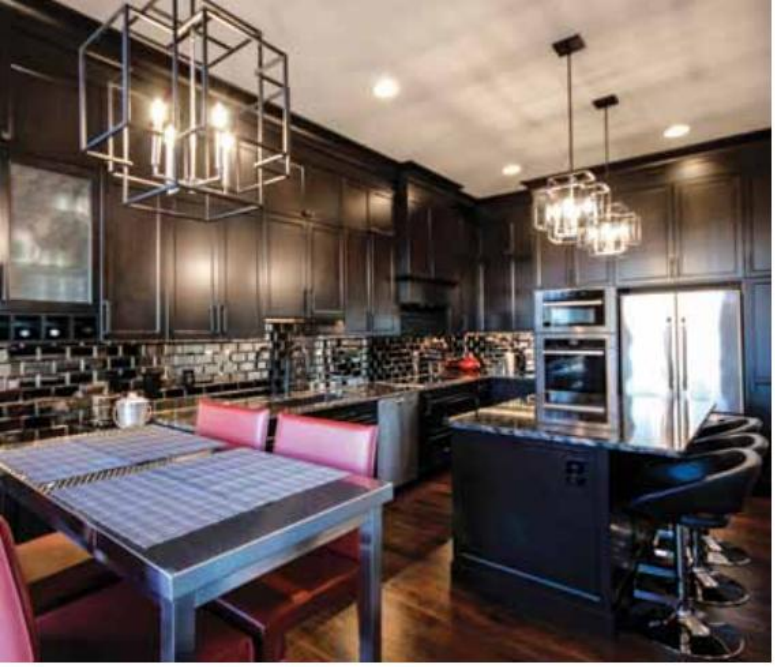
These floor plans offer you a bird's eye view.



MAIN LEVEL



SECOND LEVEL



two young children.

"I was prepared to deal with whatever came my way in working with the RM," he says. "We went through a handful of revisions and a couple major overhauls."

Mike and Pam wanted lots of natural light and a view, so a side-by-side main floor with a shared stairway to side-by-side second floor bedrooms, offices, and ensuites was ultimately the most desirable option. There are twin three-car garages, separate entrances, and mudrooms with storage. A central ➤







The home has been designed with a separate main door, entryway and garages for each family.

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Shared: satellite, internet, land costs, common areas including laundry room (but two sets of washers and dryers), one dog, one cat.





shared staircase leads to the second storey common areas and separate living spaces.

The Wish Lists

"I have home design software and this is the fourth house I've been part of building," says Will. "I knew we had to pull everyone's needs and wishes together. You want to end up with everyone feeling like they've been heard."

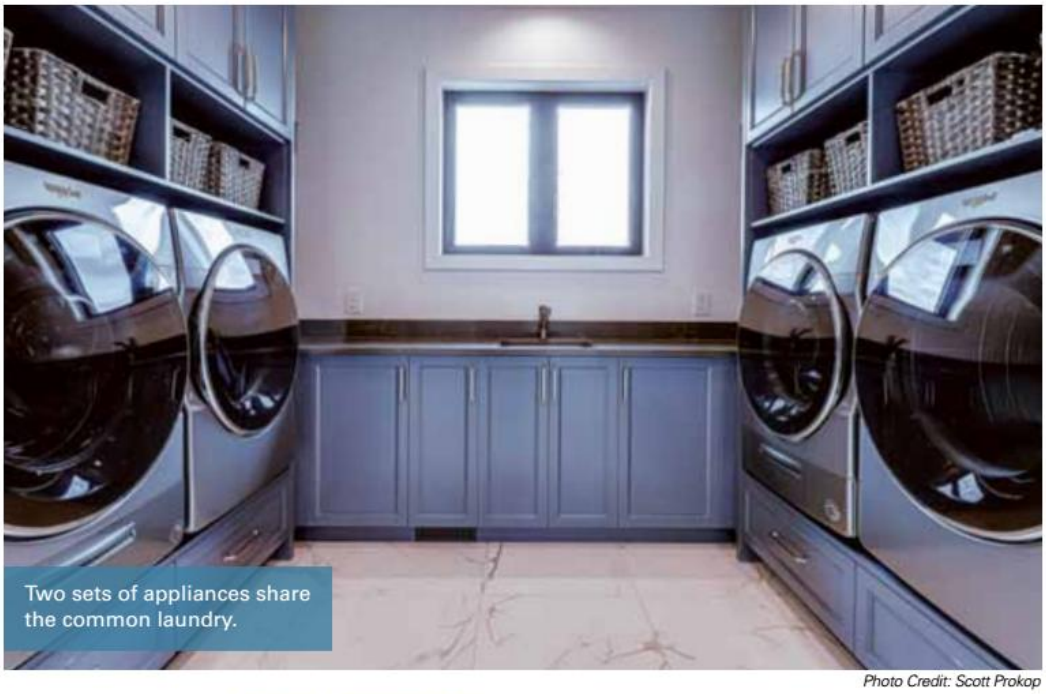
In addition to all the family meetings, he asked that everyone give him their wish list–both big and small desires. When something didn't work, he could show them what changes were needed or why something might have to be sacrificed.

Will and Ashley selected Lexis Homes as the home builder. They clicked with Cam Skoropat, president of Lexis and felt confident in the collaboration that needed to happen to bring their home to fruition.

Will became the 'point person' for the builder. Having one person as the 'voice' for a multigenerational 4,550 sq. ft. build makes it easier for everyone.

"Lexis was so good to work with," says Ashley. "There were things Will could deal with on our behalf, and then they met with each ➤





Two sets of appliances share the common laundry.

Photo Credit: Scott Prokop



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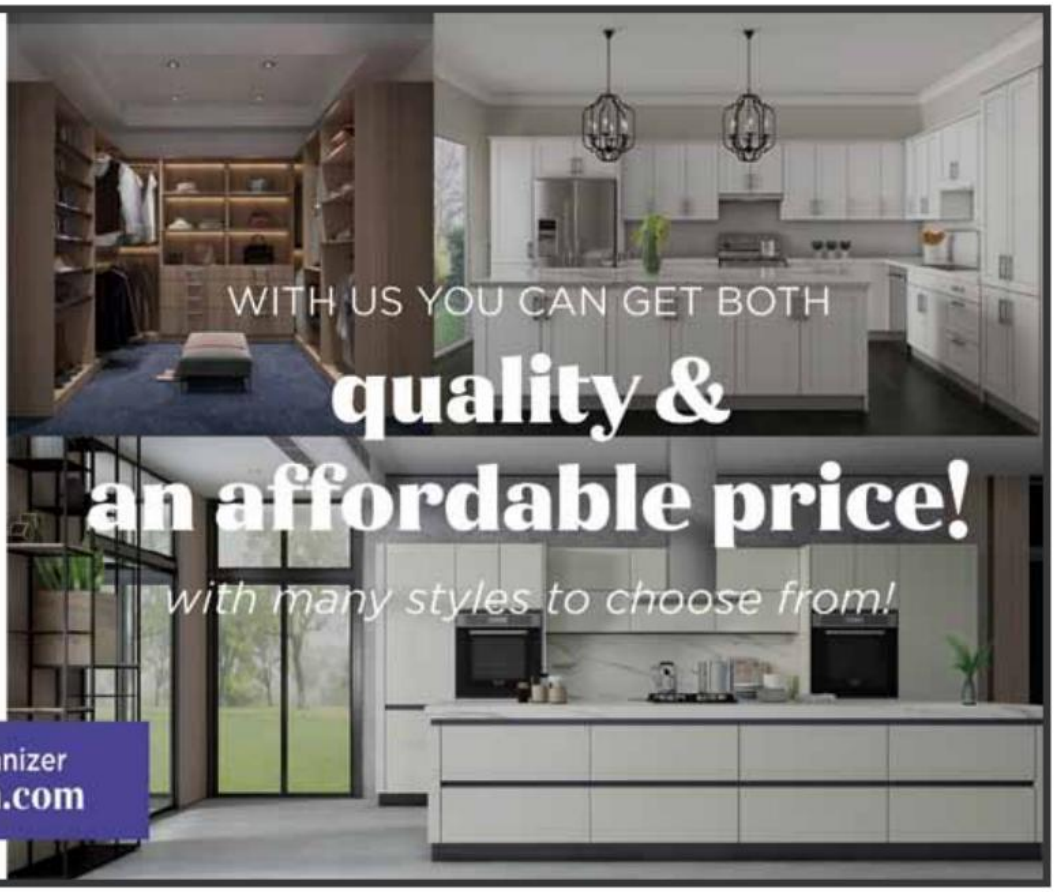
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THE BEGINNING OF A TREND?

Lexis president Cam Skoropat says while multigenerational living isn't exactly a trend, it's gaining popularity. He's referring to something more creative than a dark basement suite or small over-the-garage apartment. A 'secondary suite' refers to a permanent more purposeful living space.

"We think a multigenerational home with a secondary suite can be a lot of fun to design and build. It's essentially two builds in one," says Cam. "Every municipality has its own regulations. Once you have the discretionary use approval and understand the rules, you can design each living space in a way that suits everyone under one roof."

Lexis Design and Style Coordinator Shilynne Ward, an architectural technologist, enjoyed the challenge of interior decorating for two couples with different floor plans, needs and tastes. "They did have some flooring they both liked and pulled similar tiles, but they maximized their own likes in their separate areas," she explains. "It was a lot easier than it might seem."

Soundproofing was an important consideration, and Valerie Dale, Interior Design Technologist with Lexis, was well aware of that during floor plan design. People need to feel like they're in their own home, not a hotel room. Cam agrees that purposeful design to dampen sound in function and placement of rooms, as well as denser drywall and insulation in shared walls is critical. "We love it when people say they can't hear the other TV or the kids early in the morning."

Cam says 2019 saw an increase in secondary suites. "We've noticed more people are interested. With housing getting more expensive, people want something new and different. From a builder's point of view, you can be more creative and it's fun to design."



Both ensuite bathrooms are equipped with luxurious soaker tubs and tv's.

couple separately about our own living spaces. Lexis took two different styles and made it work so everyone ended up happy."

Aging at Home

Even though Mike and Pam are only 51 and 49 respectively, the questions about aging were at the forefront of everyone's mind. Mike's elderly parents had dealt with the impact of stroke and dementia. They had to move, rather suddenly, into a facility in 2013.

"Seeing what Dad had to do and how hard it was for his parents really opened our eyes," says Ashley. "If the time comes when Mom and Dad have needs, they're right here. People we know have had to make sudden and not very pleasant choices about where they have to live. A big part of our thinking was about the future."

Will calls the family conversations "a bit more organic" than just talking about avoiding a nursing home. Planning well now helped with the design of their shared lives. ➤

"It can get messy fast," says Mike. "It can be hard at a time when it's difficult anyway. Talking before a crisis is really important. We left no stone unturned."

Pam agrees. "Ashley is our only child so it would fall to her to be driving to check on us and help," she says. "Now, if the time comes when we need more support, we're literally a few feet away."

In the meantime, she adds, everyone appreciates there will be time every day to enjoy each other's company—and also space to live their own lives.

Karin Melberg Schwier



The outdoor landscaping will accommodate each couple's needs and take full advantage of the 4.5 acres.

Photo Credit: Scott Prokop



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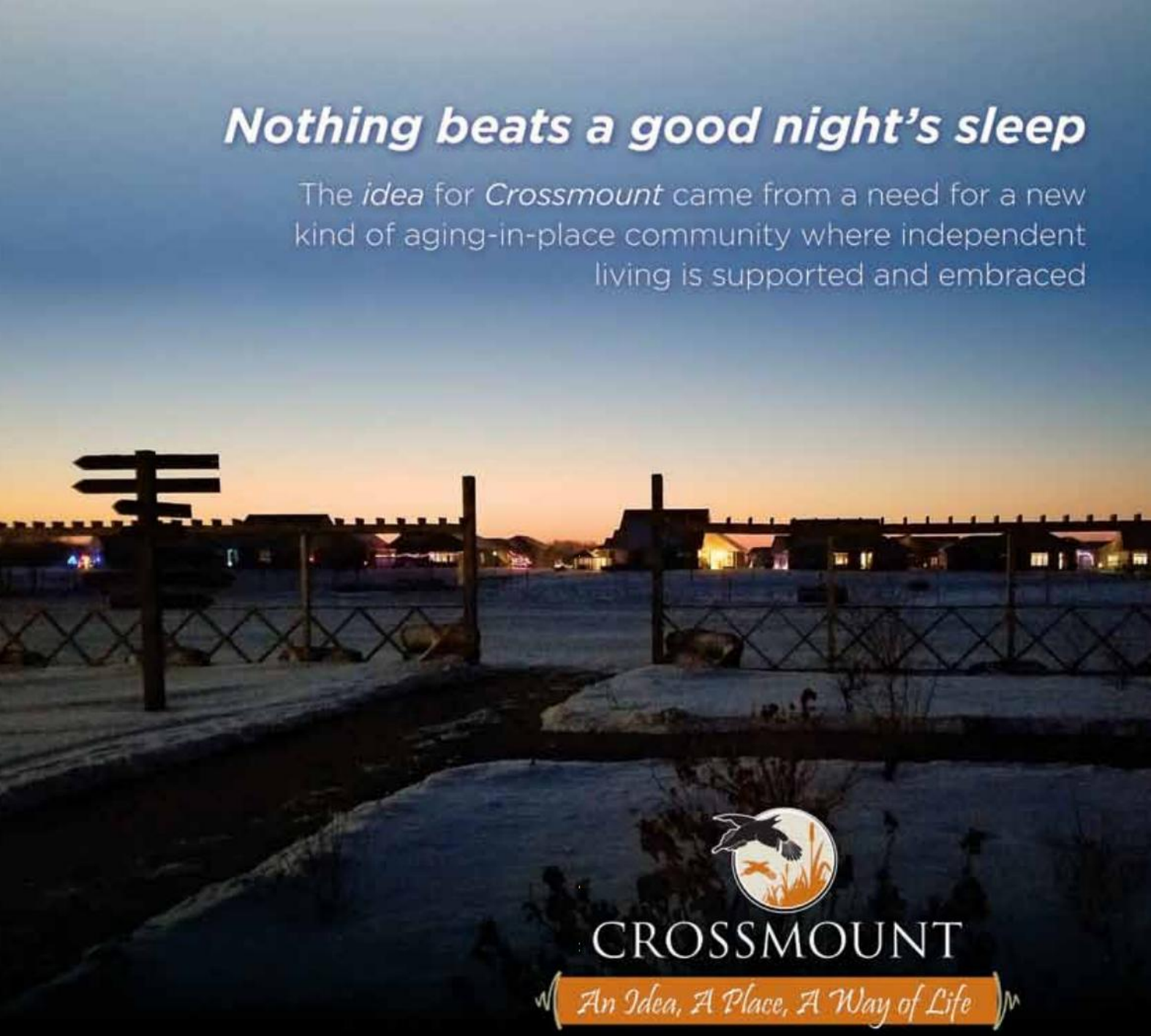
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HOME FOOD: SCANDINAVIAN MEATBALLS

CRAIG SILLIPHANT

In writing this column over the years, I've learned how to make some incredible dishes. Some are exotic cuisine from all corners of the globe, some are down-home foods from right here in Saskatchewan. The funny thing about food is that it becomes even more enjoyable when there is a good story attached to it, something to chew on besides the food itself. So when my good friend, Eric Anderson, offered to show me how to make his grandmother's Scandinavian meatballs, which came with family stories about spies and secret ingredients, I didn't hesitate.

Eric is a great storyteller himself, creator of a wonderfully local podcast called YXE Underground, where he looks at people in Saskatoon who are often flying under the radar but making a difference in our community. He makes his home in Saskatoon now, but he was originally from Swift Current, and every second weekend, they'd visit his grandmother in Chaplain, Saskatchewan.

"We'd go to Grandma's house for dinner," says Eric. "Sometimes she'd make Scandinavian meatballs."

The story starts with Eric's Grandpa Andy Anderson, who arrived in Canada as a child, an orphan ➤




Grandma Anderson.




A young Eric with Grandpa Anderson.

from Norway. Eventually, he ended up in Southern Saskatchewan. He met Eric's grandmother, who became Helen Anderson when they fell in love and got married. They moved back to Norway right before the start of World War II.

Unfortunately, the Nazis invaded Norway in 1940, occupying the country until the German surrender in 1945. During that time, Grandpa and Grandma Anderson lived under Nazi rule. But Grandpa Anderson became a spy for the Norwegian Underground, a heroic and dangerous endeavor.

When the hostilities ended, though their ties to Norway were strong, the Andersons moved back to Saskatchewan. Many years later, grandson Eric grew up eating Grandma's Scandinavian meatballs at the house in Chaplain.

"The house was really small," remembers Eric. "The kitchen was definitely the hub of it. I remember vividly the smell of the gravy beginning to simmer. I'd sit at the dinner table and just watch as she'd make meatballs. We didn't have them a lot. It was a treat, so the anticipation was big."

Eric's dog, Fred, watches us from his perch on the couch as we prep the ingredients. First we dissolve a bouillon beef cube in a cup of hot water, which we'll come back to. To start the meatballs, we soak breadcrumbs in milk, squeeze them out, and add them to the hamburger. We fry a chopped onion with butter until the onions are translucent and add them to the hamburger mixture.

Eric remembers that no one could ever replicate ➤





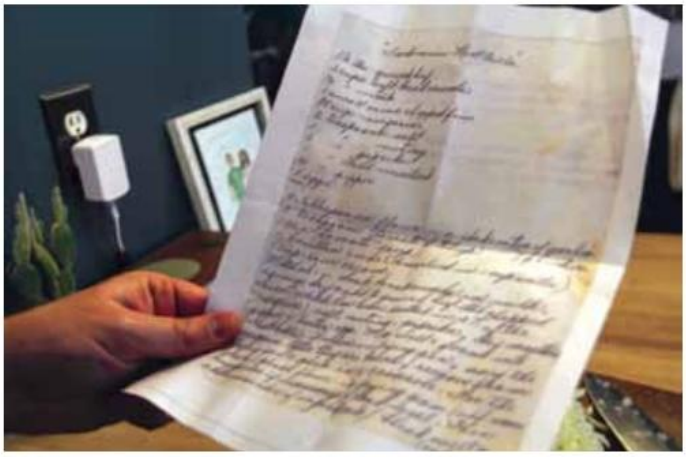
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Grandma Anderson's meatballs; there was a secret ingredient and she wouldn't divulge the recipe. But he doesn't remember why. So we phone a friend: Eric's dad, Gary Anderson.

"It was considered to be a very special recipe and not to be shared," says Gary. He says the recipe has been in the family forever and probably came from Norway.

"She did have to share it once for Lion's Club in Chaplain, so she finally gave in. But then she was so mad at the result," Gary continues. "One lady didn't have an ingredient and substituted something else. Another lady decided that instead of sour cream, she'd do something else. She was just livid. After that, *nobody* got the recipe."

Many years down the road, Eric's Mom *did* get the recipe before Grandma passed away, and it turned out the secret ingredient was—wait for it—nutmeg! And I should warn you, lest you disrespect the memory of Grandma Anderson—there will be no substitutions.

While we're talking about rules, I should also tell you that whatever you do, don't refer to them as Swedish meatballs.

"The word Sweden was a bad word in that house growing up," laughs Eric.

"During Nazi occupation," explains Gary, "the Swedes were neutral."

We let Gary go and we add the secret nutmeg, paprika, dry mustard, pepper and beaten eggs to the hamburger, mixing everything together and forming balls. We brown them in a frying pan (it helps to have two if you want to go faster).

After that, you place them in a casserole dish or roaster.

Next comes the gravy. Eric uses the same frying pan he used to cook the butter, onion and meatballs, leaving the juices in there for flavour. He puts flour into the pan and blends it over medium heat. He adds garlic powder, ketchup, a can of tomato soup and that bouillon cube we set aside earlier. Then we add a cup of sour cream.

Eric stirs until it thickens to a creamy reddish-orange gravy. He pours it over the meatballs and covers them, cooking it for an hour at 300°F.

We talk more about his memories of his grandmother while we wait. Young Eric looked up to her, yet was a bit intimidated by her. She was a powerful figure demanding matriarchal respect. But most of all, he loved her cooking.

"Everyone says their Grandma is the best cook, but Grandma Anderson really *was* the best cook," says Eric. "Scandinavian meatballs, mashed potatoes, and the best buns you've ever had in your entire life."

The buzzer dings and we plate the meatballs and grab some forks. I'm anxious to give them a try. I bite into one and I'm presented with all the warmth and flavour of home-cooked memories.

It takes me back through time, through the history of my friend Eric's family, their struggles and their triumphs. Through this food, I know him and his kin on a new level.

And sure enough, you can taste the nutmeg.

Craig Silliphant



SCANDINAVIAN MEATBALLS RECIPE

MEATBALLS:

- 1 ½ lbs ground beef
- 2 cups soft breadcrumbs
- ½ cup milk
- 1 small onion, chopped fine
- 3/8 cup margarine
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 tsp nutmeg
- 2 tsp paprika
- 1 tsp dried mustard
- ¼ tsp pepper
- 3 eggs

GRAVY:

- 4 tbsp flour
- A shake or two of garlic powder
- 2 tsp tomato ketchup
- 1 can tomato soup
- 1 bouillon cube (dissolved in water)
- 1 cup sour cream

METHOD:

Meatballs: Soak breadcrumbs in milk. Squeeze milk out of crumbs and add to the hamburger in a large bowl.

Chop onion and put into fry pan with margarine. Cook onion on medium heat until onion is translucent and add to the hamburger.

Add remaining dry ingredients and egg to hamburger mix.

Mix and form balls; brown them in a frying pan. Then place meatballs in roaster. Set aside.

Gravy: Put flour into the same frying pan on medium heat and blend. Add garlic powder, ketchup, tomato soup, bouillon cube water and the sour cream. Stir well to thicken.

Pour gravy over meatballs and cover. Cook for one hour in oven at 300°F.



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Curbside pump at Hudson Essex service station, 3rd Avenue at 23rd Street, 1928.

HOMEtown Reflections

JEFF O'BRIEN

THE ROARING 20'S

Photo Credit: Local History Room - Saskatoon Public Library - LH 540

The Roaring 20's, we call them. The Jazz Age. From flappers to F. Scott Fitzgerald, from the Charleston to Charlie Chaplin, images of the 1920s pervade our popular culture even now, a century later.

It was a decade of prosperity and excess. A time of extremes, when the economy lurched from boom to bust and prohibition was on everyone's lips. But it was also a period of peace, prosperity, innovation and excitement. When, for a fleeting moment, the world danced in the sunlight.

An Inauspicious Start

The 1920s started poorly. The years just after the war had been marked by bitter political and economic unrest as the country struggled to return to normal. Returning soldiers were hit the hardest. Unemployment skyrocketed, reaching crisis levels in 1921. There was a housing shortage: accommodations were poor, rents were high, and overcrowding was rampant, with reports in Saskatoon of five or six families crammed into a single house. By 1920, food and clothing prices were double what they had been in 1914, but wages still lagged far behind. It was a recipe for chaos.

A Boom Begins

But as the decade progressed, things began to sort themselves out. By 1926,

Saskatoon was booming again. The population increased by 70 per cent, from 25,000 to 43,000 (mostly in the last half of the decade) making us the fastest growing city in Western Canada.

The construction industry raced to keep up. The value of building permits issued by the city increased from less than a million dollars in 1921 to nearly six million in each of 1928-1930, approaching the records set in the pre-war boom years.

We got ten new schools, including three high schools, a new public library, and a brand-new police station. Downtown construction projects included the elegant new Eaton's building on Third Avenue (nowadays the offices of the Public School Board) while across the river a flurry of construction saw half a dozen new buildings go up at the University. Meanwhile, both City and St. Paul's hospitals underwent significant expansions and a completely new hospital, the sprawling Saskatoon Sanatorium was built at the south end of Avenue K.

Public health made huge strides in the 1920s, including the addition of a chlorination plant at the municipal waterworks, the mandatory pasteurization of milk, and vaccinations for diphtheria and scarlet fever.

In 1923, there were ➤



Unveiling of the cenotaph war memorial on 21st Street, 1929.

Photo Credit: Local History Room - Saskatoon Public Library - A 275



nearly 3,000 "unmodern" houses in Saskatoon, homes without sewer or running water. These accounted for more than half the total housing stock. With the city poised to add thousands of new homes to accommodate its ballooning population, the Medical Health Officer declared all-out war on the backyard privy. In the end, an additional 3,000 "modern" houses were built during the 1920s, most of them after 1925. For the first time, homes with flush toilets outnumbered those without.



The Saskatoon Sanatorium opened in 1925.

Photo Credit: Local History Room - Saskatoon Public Library - B 1696



During Prohibition, Saskatoon hotels were frequently raided in search of bootleg liquor.

Photo Credit: Local History Room - Saskatoon Public Library - A 1753

The Long Dry Spell

One of the enduring images of the 1920s is prohibition. But while the newspaper in Saskatoon frequently ran lurid articles about gangsters and gun molls, those things mostly happened somewhere else.

Not to say that we didn't have bootleggers and homebrew, because we certainly did. But prohibition was a lot less colourful here than it was south of the border. It also lasted longer. The Saskatchewan government closed the bars in 1915. They didn't re-open until 1935. Worse, from 1918-1925, even the government-run liquor stores were closed. But Saskatoon was never truly dry. Drinking was allowed in the privacy of one's own home and alcohol was generally available, including by prescription from your local druggist.

The hotel bars—ostensibly limited to selling soda pop and other non-alcoholic beverages—could generally be relied on to have something more palatable stashed behind the counter, and bootleggers frequently ran speakeasies out of hotel rooms.

This kept law enforcement busy. The owner of the Queen's Hotel, for example, was arrested several times, once for selling liquor out of a booth at the Exhibition. Still, most of what passed for prohibition here in the 1920s seems to have been pretty low-key.

The Klan

Not a moment of pride for the city or province, thousands of residents were full-fledged members of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) throughout Saskatchewan.

Riding a wave of anti-immigrant sentiment, the Klan moved into Saskatchewan in around 1927. At its height, it boasted some 25,000 members, many of were said to be politically very well-connected.

On the Move

The number of cars in Saskatoon grew enormously in the 1920s. For a little while, we even had an automobile factory out on 11th Street West. Directories for 1930 showed 13 car dealerships, 30 gas stations, and a raft of related shops and industries. The automobile was big business, even here. Despite this, public transit was still the cheapest and most reliable way to get from hither to yon, and the streetcars of the Saskatoon Municipal Railway system were rarely empty.

If the automobile was big in the '20s, aviation was even bigger. The aeroplane had come of age during the war, and the aircraft of the 1920s were a far cry from the clumsy, underpowered kites of pre-war days. New records were being set and old ones broken, and newspaper audiences thrilled to breathless stories about aviation celebrities like Charles Lindbergh and Amelia Earhart, and their latest, most outrageous "hops."

Lofty Ambitions

Aviation came to Saskatoon in 1919 when a wartime flight instructor named Stan McClelland built a hangar at the west end of 22nd Street. The prospects for commercial aviation here were still rather thin in those days, and despite plans for passenger and delivery services, he seems to have made most of his money as an instructor and travelling barnstormer. A more unusual enterprise was the Ken ➤



Traffic accident on Lorne Avenue, 1928.

Photo Credit: Local History Room - Saskatoon Public Library - LH 4477-1



A student at the Ken Wah School of Aviation, 1921.

Photo Credit: Local History Room - Saskatoon Public Library - PH 96-80-16



Stan McClelland, 1921.

Photo Credit: Local History Room - Saskatoon Public Library - LH 3321

Wah School of Aviation, which trained pilots for the Chinese Republican Flying Corps out of a hangar north of Mayfair.

Saskatoon's first airport was the Municipal Air Harbour, which opened in 1928 in a field west of Avenue A just north of 51st Street, and was operated by the local flying club under contract with the city. By 1929, the Saskatoon Aero Club was the second largest flying club in Canada and included our own aerial celebrity, Nellie Carson, the first licensed woman pilot in Saskatchewan, who set an aviation record in 1930 by reaching a height of 16,000 feet without an oxygen mask.

Hitting the Airwaves

But some of the biggest changes of the 1920s were in the entertainment world, with the arrival of commercial radio and of "talkies"—movies with sound.

Saskatoon's first successful commercial radio station was CFQC, which went on the air on July 15, 1923. By 1925, there were four stations here, including the Bedford Road Collegiate Radio Club, which broadcast on Monday and Saturday nights as "Saskatoon's Snappy Station!" In those days, everyone used the same frequency, so stations had to coordinate their broadcast schedules.

The 1920s was also the golden age of movie theatres. In Saskatoon in 1929, the event of the year was the construction of the Capitol Theatre, the grandest, most beautiful, most expensive



"Gun Molls" - Saskatoon style, ca. 1926.

Photo Credit: Local History Room - Saskatoon Public Library - PH-95-17-7



A film crew on 19th Street downtown, Saskatoon's "Chinatown" district in the 1920s.

Photo Credit: Local History Room - Saskatoon Public Library - LH 4162



Watery hijinks at the 1921 Pike Lake Water Carnival.

Photo Credit: Local History Room - Saskatoon Public Library - PH-95-56-8



Martha Bowes, Saskatchewan's first female radio announcer, 1927.

Photo Credit: Local History Room - Saskatoon Public Library - PH 98-103-1



Saskatoon's palatial Capitol Theatre.

Photo Credit: Local History Room - Saskatoon Public Library - A 2051

theatre in the city's history, and the first one built especially for the newest in high-tech movie excitement: "talking pictures."

The Capitol opened its doors for the first time on May 11, 1929. Thousands lined up that weekend to see *Close Harmony*, starring Charles "Buddy" Rogers and Nancy Carroll, and to hear them actually talk and sing.

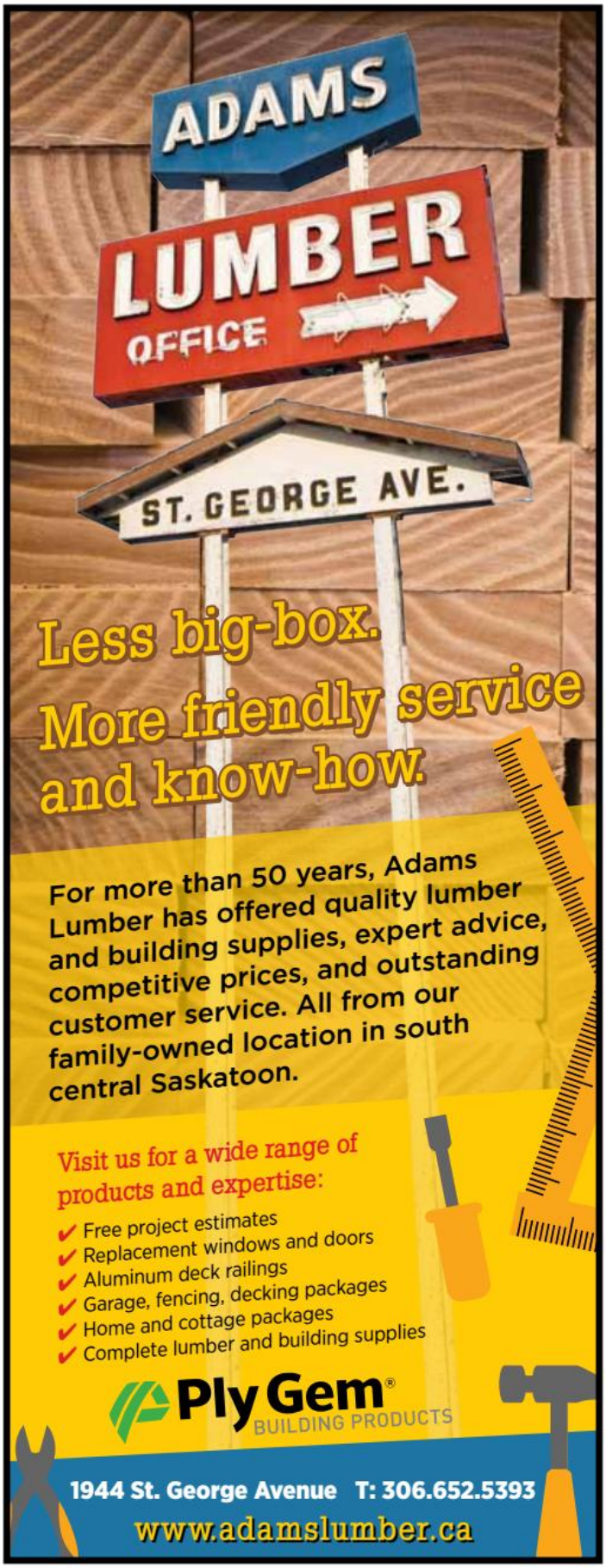
The newspaper reviewer was as enthusiastic about the magnificence of the theatre, with its thickly carpeted foyer "so reminiscent of the grand opera houses of Europe," as he was about the talking picture, "this new art of the entertainment world."

Out On the Town

By 1929, Saskatoon had 50 restaurants and six theatres, typically showing a mixture of live theatre, dance, comedy and movies. On the weekends there were dances and cabarets in places like Campbell's Palm Room, the Labour Temple, or the Art Academy. There was a thriving "Chinatown" district downtown along 19th Street. There were all sorts of clubs to join, while lectures and political meetings were widely advertised and well attended. In the summer, nearby resorts like Manitou Beach were hugely popular, with packed excursion trains leaving every weekend. And if you couldn't get to Manitou, there were always hijinks a-plenty at the annual Pike Lake Water Carnival, or down at Riversdale Pool, the city's first outdoor swimming pool, which opened in 1924.

Indeed, despite its failings—and we certainly had them—Saskatoon in the 1920s seems to have found its happy place. A 1929 newspaper advertisement was talking about the Capitol Theatre, but might just as well have been talking about Saskatoon itself, when it called it "so beautiful you'll be content to do nothing but take in its beauty and call it money well spent."

Jeff O'Brien







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DALLYING WITH DAHLIAS

THE DELIGHTFUL DICOTYLEDON

KARIN MELBERG SCHWIER LILLIAN LANE

When Larry met Val in 2012, he knew in his heart the relationship was the real thing. But just to seal the deal, he took a chance and showed her his big dahlias. She was not only impressed; it turned out she was a dahlia lover, too. "When we drove out to his place near Delisle, it was an unbelievable sight. The dahlias were so big I thought they were rose bushes. I've always just loved them."

Larry and Val have grown dahlias for nearly 40 years. Some people remember this particular flowering plant as big, bushy and colourful on farms and small-town plots, a traditional staple in Baba's garden. But they're equally at home and 'trendy' in urban flowerbeds today. The dahlia is a retro plant that has blossomed again with new popularity, a bit like the old hollyhock staple of every farm garden.

"Dahlias are so easy to plant," Val insists. "I just dig a random hole, stick the tubers in and that's it. They're an excellent plant for filling up a big garden space and the large blossoms are so pretty."

Sunflower Family

The dahlia, Mexico's national plant, is named in honour of Swedish botanist Anders Dahl. The Mexicans have loved it since Aztec times, and it is used for ceremonies and décor. ➤



The first time Val saw Larry's dahlias, "I thought they were rose bushes."



The tubers are edible (petals too) and are featured in many dishes. The dahlia is a member of the sunflower family along with daisy, chrysanthemum and zinnia cousins. The plant is an annual, but the tubers can be dug and planted again and again. It does well in the newly defined Zone 3b. Saskatoon falls into this new hardiness zone.

Variety of Shapes and Sizes

Dahlia breeders have come up with a seemingly inexhaustible range of possible bloom shapes, sizes and presentations. Double blossoms show off more than one colour in a single bloom. The blooms are actually composites of individual flowers arranged around the pistil. Some can resemble orchids, peonies and sunflowers, and others like tightly compact concentric loops that look for all the world like skillful Spirograph compositions.

Plants can be miniature, perfect for along a garden path. Medium growth of 15 to 32 inches provides a

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useful backdrop or hedge, and the big ones loom up to six feet tall. Those plants require staking or they'll keel over in a wind. Some blooms are small; others can grow up to a plate-sized diameter. There are stripes, pastels and vibrant varieties. For Val, the scarlets are a perennial favourite. She thinks the variety is 'Taratahi Ruby'.

"We've had the most luck with these," she explains. I've bought many other varieties but I keep going back to red and have ➤

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found they multiply the best."

In fact, these red are the great grandchildren of the original dahlias Larry had, tubers that he would dig up and move to his next property. Often disappointed with store-bought "small like a peanut" tubers, Larry says, "They just don't do as well for us here."

The 'dicotyledon' name refers to the fact the flowering plant has two leaves in the embryo, like beans, peas or potatoes.

"They just bloom non-stop from July to the end," says Val. "It's so great to see your flower gardens and pathways continually bloom when everything else is coming to the end of its cycle." Dahlia, apparently,



Val says dahlias are an excellent plant for hardy garden borders.



are an Energizer Bunny of the dicotyledon family.

Hardy for the Prairies

With 42 species, the dahlia is hardy and robust for Zone 3b, but it doesn't like cold toes and with so much water stored in the stalk, an early frost will bring it to its knees.

"The dahlias will still be blooming long after my other perennials die off in the fall," says Val. They extend the season with colour right up to freeze-up. "But when the frost is too much, they will blacken right away. We cut them off, but we wait a week or two to dig." So while the hardy dahlia stands up well during the growing season, it needs some help to hibernate for the winter. ➤







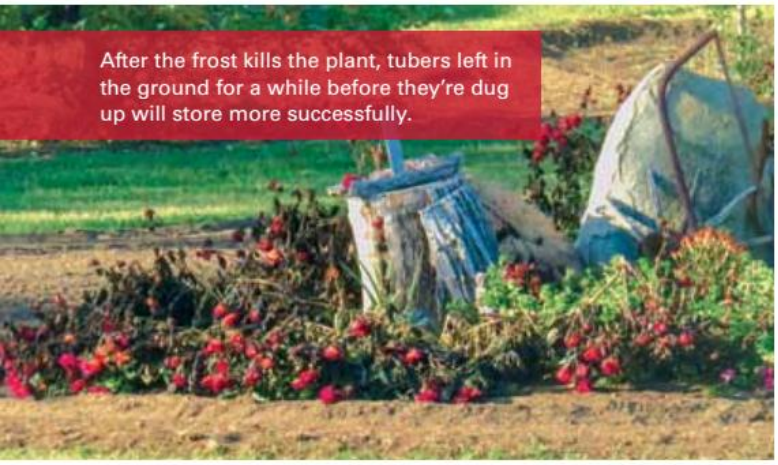


DAHLIA DO'S

- Dahlia like full sun and well-drained, slightly acidic soil.
- They're a hardy plant and can survive in dry conditions, but they grow larger with some hydration. They are natural-born conservationists and store a lot of water in big stalks.
- Deadheading keeps up appearances, but Val says they bloom vigorously even if she doesn't have time to trim the spent blooms.
- Because of that water, hard frost is not a friend. Cut back, but leave the tubers in the ground for another week or two to harden them.
- Dig and lay out in the garage or basement until thoroughly dry, then store in gunnysacks in a root cellar or other cool dry area for the winter.
- Sprinkle the petals on salads. They're edible. If you're keen on tasting the tuber, you'll find it similar in flavour to artichoke, jicama or celery. The taste becomes sweeter when tubers are stored for a time.
- Plant lots! They are nectar and pollen-rich so important pollinators like honeybees will gravitate to them.

DAHLIA DON'TS

- For large plants, don't separate the tubers after digging in the fall. Some 'root balls' measure 12 X 12 inches. They are easily split if more plants are desired.
- Understand what sizes are available and plant in the right place. A six-footer along the garden path is going to look like Clark Griswold's oversized Christmas tree.
- Dahlia like water, but overwatering can easily lead to rot. The plant likes to pull water up into its stalk. It seems fine, until it suddenly decomposes.
- Store tubers for winter only after thoroughly dry. If separating tuber clumps, don't cut individual tubers (as you would a potato). Leave tubers intact.



After the frost kills the plant, tubers left in the ground for a while before they're dug up will store more successfully.



Divide and Conquer

Dahlia roots are not a central tap (think carrot). These group in a clump of finger-like tubers, though some can look a bit like brownish beets or sweet potatoes. Dividing for new plants easy. But in order to grow next season, the tuber must have a bud or an 'eye' like a seed potato to produce a new plant.

"Waiting a bit after the freeze to dig just makes for healthier plants next year," Val says. Because these plants are so robust, the tuber clumps are often too big to carry in a pail. "I have to split them with a spade, and gather them all up with the half ton truck," says Val.

"For several years, Larry had about ten gunny sacks full each fall but because these are so healthy, they propagate and now we deal with about 30 bags. We dry, separate if we want more plants, and then store."

Some people would view this harvest as a lot of work, but Val and Larry love the plant so much, it's almost like caring for beloved livestock.

A Dahlia Duo

Larry and Val discovered a shared love of dahlias seven years ago. They share an affinity for gardening—flowers and vegetables—and manage a huge garden and heated greenhouse. Val starts planting inside in mid-March. Friends and neighbours share the bounty these two produce and often take home clumps of tubers to start their own dahlia generation.

Karin Melberg Schwier



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VIEWFINDER

A LOCAL PROJECT TO ADMIRE EACH ISSUE

LILLIAN LANE

This buffet sideboard was lovingly reclaimed by Nicole Ratzlaff (Prairie Vintage Charm). Brought back from the ashes with electric blue paint, a black glaze and a gel stain for the top.

Want more inspiration? IG: @prairievintagecharm
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